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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/648,020	08/26/2003	Minoru Mizutani	9448-145US (G0287US)	3476
570	7590	09/29/2005	EXAMINER	
AKIN GUMP STRAUSS HAUER & FELD L.L.P. ONE COMMERCE SQUARE 2005 MARKET STREET, SUITE 2200 PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103			NGUYEN, LAM S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2853	

DATE MAILED: 09/29/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/648,020	MIZUTANI, MINORU
	Examiner	Art Unit
	LAM S. NGUYEN	2853

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 August 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2,4,6,8,10,12,14,16,18 and 19 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,3,5,7,9,11,13,15 and 17 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 August 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

In response to the restriction requirement, the applicant elected claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15 for further examination. As a result, claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18-19 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

1. Claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nomura et al. (US 2003/0053819 A1).

Nomura et al. discloses an image forming apparatus comprising:

a plurality of removable developing units (*FIG. 4, elements 47Y, 47K, 47M, 47C*) each of which has an image carrier whose width is narrower than a width of a printable area of printing medium (*FIG. 4, elements 41Y, 41K, 41M, 41C*); and

a driving unit for driving the plurality of the removable developing units (*paragraph [0022-0024]*);

the plurality of the removable developing units being disposed in different rows parallel to a main scanning direction (*FIG. 2-4, elements 47Y, 47K, 47M, 47C: The developing units are arranged in four different rows parallel to the medium scanning direction, wherein each row has one developing unit*) such that one end of an image producing area of an image

carrier first developing unit coincides with one end of an image producing area of an image carrier of a second developing unit adjoining to the first developing unit (*FIG. 2-4: The print area printed by the right end of the developing unit such as 47K coincides to the print area printed by the right end of the adjoining developing unit 47C*);

the image forming apparatus further comprising a control unit for supplying printing data to the plurality of the removable developing units in timings shifted from row to row (*FIG. 2: The developing units print in timings shifted from row 47K to row 47Y*).

Referring to claim 3: in which the plurality the developing units are installed in a developing-unit guide (*FIG. 4*).

Referring to claim 7: in which the developing-unit guide is removable from a main body of the image forming apparatus (*FIG. 4, element 70*).

Referring to claim 9: in which a bottom plate of the developing-unit guide serves as a part of a printing media transporting passageway (*FIG. 2: The printing media moves underneath of element 70*).

Referring to claim 11: in which the bottom plate of the developing-unit guide is provided with ribs parallel to a printing media transporting direction (*FIG. 2, elements 45Y, 45C, 45K, and 45M*).

Referring to claim 13: in which each of the plurality of the removable developing units is a color developing unit (*FIG. 4: Four color developing units 47Y, 47K, 47M, and 47C*).

Referring to claim 15: in which the plurality of the removable developing units are situated over a printing media transporting passageway within a main body of the image forming apparatus (*FIG. 2, 14*).

Referring to claim 17: in which the plurality of the removable developing units are situated over an intermediate transferring unit within a main body of the image forming apparatus (*FIG. 13*).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nomura et al. (US 2003/0053819 A1) in view of Haneda (US 5541720).

Nomura et al. discloses the claimed invention as discussed above except the developing-unit guide is installed in a main body of the image forming apparatus so as to be rotatable about a shaft fixed to the main body and pivoting one end of the developing-unit guide.

Haneda discloses an image forming apparatus having a plurality of developing units installed in a developing-unit guide (*FIG. 10, element 113*), wherein the developing-unit guide is installed in a main body (*FIG. 10, element 10B*) of the image forming apparatus so as to be rotatable about a shaft (*FIG. 10, element 3*) fixed to the main body and pivoting one end of the developing-unit guide.

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify the developing-unit guide disclosed by Nomura et al. to be rotatable about the shaft fixed to the main body as disclosed by Haneda. The motivation for

doing so would have been to be able to detach or attach the developing guide to the main body in simple and easy way as taught by Haneda (*column 6, lines 60-65*).

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LAM S. NGUYEN whose telephone number is (571)272-2151. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00AM - 3:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, STEPHEN D. MEIER can be reached on (571)272-2149. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LN
09/21/2005

Hai Pham
HAI PHAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER